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Notice of Allowability	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/688,382	NISHIMURA ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Jordan M. Schwartz	2873

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. This communication is responsive to amendment received 9/26/05.
2. The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-11.
3. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some* c) None of the:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

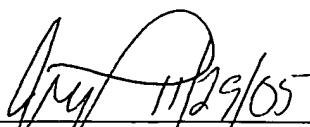
Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) hereto or 2) to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date 10/05
4. Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____.
7. Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. Other _____.



Allowed Claims: 1-11.

Reasons for Allowance

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: none of the prior art either alone or in combination disclose or teach of the claimed combination of limitations to warrant a rejection under 35 USC 102 or 103. Specifically, with reference to independent claim 1, none of the prior art either alone or in combination disclose or teach of the claimed tip optical element unit for an immersion microscope specifically including, as the distinguishing features in combination with the other limitations, the claimed annular light blocking area provided at an interface between the first optical element and the second optical element and a gap between the sample and the first optical element is filled with liquid having a refractive index larger than air. Specifically, with reference to independent claim 2, none of the prior art either alone or in combination disclose or teach of the claimed tip optical element unit for an immersion microscope specifically including, as the distinguishing features in combination with the other limitations, the claimed light blocking area sandwiched between the first optical element and the second optical element and a gap between the sample and the first optical element is filled with liquid having a refractive index larger than air. Specifically, with reference to independent claim 3, none of the prior art either alone or in combination disclose or teach of the claimed tip optical element unit for an immersion microscope specifically including, as the distinguishing features in combination with the other limitations, the claimed light blocking area sandwiched between the first optical element and the second optical element and a third optical element embedded at a

center of the first optical element and the second optical element. Specifically, with reference to independent claim 7, none of the prior art either alone or in combination disclose or teach of the claimed method of making a tip optical element unit for an immersion microscope specifically including, as the distinguishing features in combination with the other limitations, the claimed beam restricting element sandwiched between the first optical element and the second optical element and a gap between the sample and the first optical element is filled with liquid having a refractive index larger than air. Specifically, with reference to independent claim 8, none of the prior art either alone or in combination disclose or teach of the claimed method of making a tip optical element unit for an immersion microscope specifically including, as the distinguishing features in combination with the other limitations, the claimed light blocking area sandwiched between the first optical element and the second optical element and embedding a third optical element in the concave portion at the center of the first optical element and the second optical element.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jordan M. Schwartz whose telephone number is (571) 272-2337. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Friday from 8:00 to 4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ricky Mack can be reached on (571) 272-2333. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Jordan M. Schwartz
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2873
November 29, 2005



Approved by
examiner
JF

2/6
FIG.3

PRIOR ART

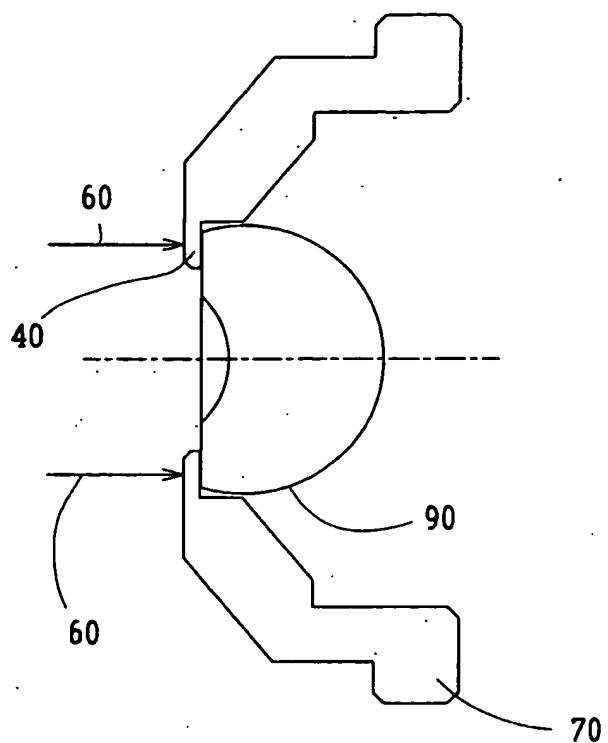


FIG.4

PRIOR ART

